

Drug

5 July 1972

Mr. B. Brooks Thomas
Vice President & General Counsel
Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.
10 East 53d Street
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Thomas:

Mr. Cord Meyer has asked me to respond to your letter to him of June 30th in connection with the book, THE POLITICS OF HEROIN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, by Alfred W. McCoy.

As you are no doubt aware, Mr. McCoy testified on 2 June 1972 before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee. His testimony included allegations concerning support of the international opium traffic by U. S. agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency, and numerous other allegations concerning participation in the opium traffic by both Americans and local personnel in Southeast Asia.

In the light of the pernicious nature of the drug traffic, allegations concerning involvement of the U. S. Government therein or the participation of American citizens should be made only if based on hard evidence. It is our belief that no reputable publishing house would wish to publish such allegations without being assured that the supporting evidence was valid. It was on this basis that Mr. Meyer talked to Mr. Canfield and Mr. Wyeth. It is Mr. Meyer's understanding that they agreed with this position and, therefore, said that a copy of the galley proofs would be made available to us. If this were done, we believe we could demonstrate to you that a considerable number of Mr. McCoy's claims about this Agency's alleged involvement are totally false and without foundation, a number are distorted beyond recognition, and none is based on convincing evidence. We are not alone in this position

as the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs also considers Mr. McCoy's claims to be essentially based on rumor or hearsay.

Mr. Nelson Gross, the Secretary of State's Senior Advisor and Coordinator for International Narcotics Matters, wrote on 8 June 1972 to Senator Proxmire, the Chairman of the Subcommittee before which Mr. McCoy appeared, and refuted a number of Mr. McCoy's major allegations. In testimony before an informal congressional panel of U. S. Representatives in New York City on 9 June 1972, Mr. Gross again refuted allegations made by Mr. McCoy but in more detail.

Ordinarily this Agency does not respond to public criticism. However, in this case we are under the strongest directives to support the U. S. Government's effort against the international narcotics traffic and are bending every effort to do so. We believe we cannot stand by and see baseless criticism designed to undermine confidence in that effort without trying to set the record straight. This, of course, in no way affects the right of a publisher to decide what to publish. I find it difficult to believe, however, that a responsible publisher would wish to be associated with an attack on our Government involving the vicious international drug traffic without at least trying to ascertain the facts.

I trust I have made quite clear our reason for asking to see the text of Mr. McCoy's book prior to publication and have also given you reason to consider your own responsibilities in this matter.

Sincerely,

STATOTHR



Lawrence R. Houston
General Counsel



Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

New York Evanston London San Francisco

*B. Brooks Thomas
Vice President &
General Counsel*

10 East 53d Street, New York, New York 10022

June 30, 1972

Cord Meyer, Jr.
1523 34th Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20007

Dear Mr. Meyer:

I understand from Messrs. Canfield, Sr. and Wyeth that you have expressed an interest in being shown the manuscript of our forthcoming book, *THE POLITICS OF HEROIN*, by Alfred W. McCoy.

Before making any determination with respect to your request, I would appreciate it if you would confirm it to me in writing, indicating to the extent you deem appropriate any reasons you may have for making such a request.

Sincerely,

BBT:jc